

Sears Fashion Board Keeps Eye on Styles

Early in 1956, Sears, Roebuck and Co. announced the formation of the Sears Fashion Board composed of four full-time members and several associates, all of them women with impressive fashion backgrounds.

Board members visit fashion markets in all parts of the United States as well as the Continent to observe and evaluate developing trends.

Women to Find Much of Sears Devoted to Them

It's not that the menfolk in town were deliberately neglected when architects Stiles and Robert Clements handed Sears the finished plans for the new Torrance store. It just so happens that when the final tally is in, almost twice as much space turns out to be devoted to women's interests than to men's. And a woman will notice it the first thing when she steps into the tasteful interior with soft pastel colors and fluorescent lights.

Entering the store from the north, or small entrance, she will immediately be in the midst of the "new" Sears store, where racks of women's ready-to-wear fashions attract the eye. There are rows of blouses, skirts, jackets, coats, dresses, and furs, tables of perky hats, and lines of the latest fall and winter stylings. Walking further, she will find the sewing department, complete with materials, patterns, sewing machines, and all types of sewing accessories. These departments are designed with her in mind.

HOUSEHOLD furnishings beckon, with curtains, drapes, furniture, floor coverings, blinds, and many other merchandise lines that are of particular interest to the lady of the house and about which she is most apt to make the final decision.

Not far down the main aisle, is the cosmetics department, with an inviting aroma identifying the sex which buys these products bearing enchanting names. Close by are lingerie and bathing suits. No question about who is boss here.

The men aren't left out of the picture, in any respect. They'll find plenty to interest them in the men's apparel departments at the south end of the center section of the store.

IN THE SECTION entered from the southwest side of the store are gadgets which appeal to the most ardent advocate of do-it-yourself. Here fishermen and hunters come in for plenty of attention, too, with a complete assortment of fishing gear and shooting equipment.

Even the reluctant gardeners will become enthusiastic about the power lawn mowers, featherweight metal wheel barrows, and garden hose in several colors.

Children, too, will find lots of interesting points in the new store, especially in the new pet shop, which will have a complete section for tropical fish, aquariums, birds and supplies. It's a safe bet that the whole family will enjoy a trip to the new store.

They attend first night theater openings, cover the resorts on summer weekends, see the important fashion shows given by designers and the New York Fashion Group, and study fashion, as it exists, as it changes.

CONFERENCES are held by the Board with leading fashion services, with industry groups and with the textile houses. A vast amount of fashion news from many sources is studied and analyzed as the Board members observe fashion where it starts, chart its course, and ready any changes for the Sears market.

The Fashion Board must keep its fingers on the fashion pulse of the public, and anticipate changes, trends, and subtle shifts in the public's style preferences. Since the Board works with Sears catalog styles as well as its retail stores, the Fashion Board's predictions must not only be correct—They must be right seven months or more before a season, for Sears catalog production is in full swing that far in advance of the appearance of the catalog.

HAVING APPRAISED all the available information regarding a particular trend, a new skirt length, the importance of jewel tones, or perhaps the return of supple fabrics, and having watched it almost from the time it was a gleam in a designer's eye, having noted the degree and promptness of acceptance, and having decided that it may have enduring fashion significance for the coming season, the Fashion Board makes a tentative recommendation.

In consultation with Sears merchandise departments, outstanding textile producers and fabric houses, the Board then determines the colors that will be most in demand. Thus, through its Fashion Board, its merchandise departments, and its sources, Sears can ready a fashion change for its many retail units.

HEADING UP the Sears Fashion Board is Mary Lewis, a woman with a wide background of fashion history. She is credited with the emergence of cotton as a fashion fabric. She vacationed in Antibes and came back with the idea for the new thoroughly-Americanized T-shirt; she adapted the peasant skirts worn by Austrian women at the Salzburg Music Festival to the dirndls that have persisted in fashions for two decades.

Miss Lewis had some interesting comments on the fashion picture: "High fashion," she said, "has to be possible at all price levels. Thirty years ago women were unsure of their fashions. They had to have an expensive label to know they were right. Today's broad and rapid dissemination of news through many outlets, including newspapers, keep American women so current they insist their clothes be fashion-right, and promptly."

"Furthermore, they are sure of themselves now, so that even if they have the money, they needn't spend it on a Paris creation to be smartly dressed."



STORE MANAGEMENT . . . These are the 13 folks who shoulder the complex responsibilities that will go into the job of piloting the giant new Sears-Torrance enterprise: (from left, back row) J. Jackson, P. T. Labins, W. A.

Koester, P. G. Walk, E. M. Odell, and W. Wilson; (front) E. H. Arneson, W. B. Crandall, J. A. Reihing, Mrs. Bernice Johnson, D. A. Stage, Manager J. G. Lowe, and G. V. Shahbaz.

144 Years of Service Represented in Management Staff of Sears-Torrance

Harmony House Color Plan Aids Decoration Work

Everything needed for the inside of the house—for every room—has been color-coordinated under one roof in the new Sears, Roebuck and Co. store through Sears exclusive Harmony House Color plan.

From bedspreads to tile for walls or floor, colors are coordinated so that color planning a room or an entire home is an easy, pleasant assignment.

"THE HARMONY House color plan is based on blending rather than matching colors," Robert Ruppert, manager of Sears drapery department, explained.

There are 16 basic colors and each one has blending shades from light pastels to rich deep tones. Each of the 16 basic colors has a color family name for the blending shades in it.

By simply remembering a color family name, you can order a lamp shade, a shag rug and a gallon of paint, for example, with your eyes closed. And when you open the order, you'll find a perfect color harmony among the items.

NOW YOU CAN really "do-it-yourself" when it comes to color planning your home. Be home furnishings in Harmony House coordinated colors, Sears has decorator-planned color schemes to help you decorate.

Ruppert pointed out that these decorator-planned color schemes are practical because they emphasize starting with what you already have — and plan to keep.

Whether it's a whole new house you have in mind or just a new chair, you'll find the Harmony House color plan a real shopping help.

One hundred and forty-four years of service with Sears is represented by the management staff of 13 seasoned employees who will direct the key functions of the new Sears-Torrance store in the Del Amo Shopping Center, near the intersection of Sepulveda Blvd. and Hawthorne Ave.

The staff is headed by manager John G. Lowe, who has seen more than 13 years of service with his company in executive assignments at the Long Beach, Vermont Ave., and Inglewood stores.

Everett M. Odell, operating superintendent, started with Sears in 1949. He previously held executive assignments in Modesto, Oakland, and Hollywood.

BERNICE JOHNSON, a veteran of 12 years with Sears, started as a credit interviewer in the Long Beach store. She has held personnel manager assignments in the Spokane and Hollywood stores.

Edwin Arneson, controller, started with Sears 12 years ago in the auditing department of the Los Angeles-Pico Blvd. store. He was controller at Sears stores in Klamath Falls, San Mateo, San Bernardino and Vermont Ave. before taking his present assignment in August of this year at Torrance.

DONALD STAGE, durable goods and home furnishings merchandise manager, is a 23-year man with the company, having started his Sears career in Newark, N. J., in June of 1936. In the last 11 years he has held merchandising and executive assignments at the Long Beach store.

Wayne Crandall, apparel and soft lines merchandise manager, started with Sears early in 1947. After successfully completing several department manager assignments at the Westwood, Santa Monica, and Valley stores, Crandall was assigned to the Los Angeles district office as a junior merchandise manager before being made wearing apparel and soft lines merchandise manager at the Hollywood store in 1958, and it was from there that Crandall was transferred to the new store in Torrance.

PAUL LABINS started with Sears six years ago in the Vermont Ave. store. He became customer service man-

ager of the Vermont Ave. store in 1957, and transferred from there to the new store.

William Koester, merchandise control manager, began his Sears career in 1948 as a trainee in the Pasadena store. He managed seven different departments before being promoted to merchandise control manager at Hollywood in 1958. He held this same position at the Hollywood store before joining the Torrance organization in July of this year.

GEORGE SHAHBAZ, credit manager, took his first job with Sears Pico Blvd. store in 1946. He has held numerous assignments, ranging from credit interviewer to credit sales manager at the Santa Rosa, San Francisco, and Vermont Ave. stores.

Before joining the Sears organization in 1955, John Reihing, display manager, worked in the display department of a Miami, Fla., department store. He started his Sears career at the Soto St. store as a displayman, and was display manager for that store before transferring to the Torrance store in July of this year.

PAUL G. WALK joined the Torrance store staff as security manager in July. Prior to then he was security manager for Sears-San Diego.

Wendell Wilson is shipping and receiving manager for the new store. He has been with Sears for 19 years and came to Torrance from El Monte, where he was on a special assignment.

John Jackson, assistant operating superintendent, started with Sears in 1953 as a trainee in the Long Beach store. Since that time he has held various supervisory assignments, coming to Torrance from the El Monte store, where he was also assistant operating superintendent.

Fashions for Family In Sears Spotlight

Fashion stepped into the spotlight with the opening of Sears Roebuck's new Torrance store yesterday.

The vast new store, located at Hawthorne and Sepulveda, in the Del Amo Shopping Center, will combine quality merchandise with the latest trends in fashion, men's and women's, boys' and girls', as well as up-to-the-minute designs in housewares and appliances.

Particularly interesting to the fashion-wise shopper will be the store's new ready-to-wear department which is to feature late style trends for fall of 1959.

A **GALAXY** of chapeaux, various shapes, sizes and shades, grace the blond wood counters and display fixtures in the military department. Conventional fall shades of black, brown and navy are in vogue with hats in new tones of autumn gold, sapphire blue, autumn green, and camel tan. There are hats of every conceivable fabric, too, ranging from the ever popular wool and fur felts to fuzzy beaver-like types and soft rayon velveteen.

The ready-to-wear departments carry garments of a special brand name, "Kerrybrooke," which the Sears stores have featured throughout the country.

KERRYBROOKE designs all types of sportswear, too, which is to be featured in the store's casual shop. Gaily colored blouses—cotton, wool synthetic fabrics of all kinds—appear in solid shades and in prints, stripes and checks.

Finely tailored skirts, also by Kerrybrooke, are to be shown in various fall shades and fabrics. And Sears will feature a new skirt in proportioned lengths of short, medium and tall.

The new Sears store will carry a variety of uniforms, maternity garments and robes, too, as well as smartly styled dresses and suits. Brightly shaded formal gowns in net, satin, taffeta, lace, tulle and chiffon are on display. And, not to be forgotten, the new rainwear section features plastic togs as well as finely tailored ensembles in other water-repellent materials, for rain or shine wear.

THE STORE WILL also stock various types of furs in fashion's favorite styles—capelets and stoles. Also fabric coats in wool, cashmere, boucle, tweed, corduroy, and leather will be available. The coats, in all tones, are fitted or full, long or short. Some are trimmed with smart fur collars, others are smartly styled in fabric.

The new store is to have a well-stocked accessory department, too. In the handbag section, leathers, plastics, fabrics synthetic alligator and synthetic lizard are all spotlighted. And there are all colors, sizes and shapes.

BRIGHTLY TONED scarves by the hundreds will be very much in evidence as well as finely made gloves in kid, pigskin and fabric.

The newest shoe styles in fine leathers and suedes will be on display. And midday will also be able to find any size and width, from the very narrow to the wider, more serviceable shoe.

Employees, Too, Considered in New Sears Store

At Sears the customer is king. But, according to Manager John Lowe, the employees, too, have some regal facilities awaiting them at the new store.

For example, when coffee break time comes for employees at the new Sears store they will find a modern comfortable retreat of their own in the special employees' area on the roof-top, where the employees' cafeteria is located. It has a seating capacity for 300 and is equipped to feed 2000 people a day with ease.

A **PORTION** of the cafeteria area is furnished with accordion doors which can be used to create a separate room for meetings with buyers, employees of a department, or promotional conferences. Part of the cafeteria features a large patio, where employees can relax and enjoy luncheon in the open air.

Mrs. Helen Young, manager of the cafeteria, has a staff of eight to serve waves of between-meal snackers. The new store will open with approximately 1200 employees.

WITH MASHED potatoes on the menu, Mrs. Young is especially proud of an automatic potato peeler. The device has an abrasive bottom surface which whisks off peels as potatoes bounce around on the spinning platform. In addition, she boasts of such other equipment as the stainless steel serving tables designed specially for Sears, and two garbage disposal units, two freezers, giving her 60 cubic feet of freezing capacity, and three refrigerators, providing a total of 130 cubic feet of refrigerated storage space.

The cafeteria is air-conditioned, has acoustical tile ceiling, fluorescent lighting and continuous music. This facility will be for employees only. Public "Snackettes" are located both on the lower and first levels of the store.

NOT STRICTLY in the special favor category, but in line for special appreciation, nonetheless, are the working areas for office personnel. Roomy, well lighted, and fully air-conditioned non-selling areas are spotted throughout the store. Latest equipment is provided for employees' use. Whether it's a salesman meeting the customer or a clerk receiving merchandise on the rear platform, all employees will be working in comfort and cleanliness.

So, even though the customer is king at Sears, the employee is also a pretty important person. Just ask one.

Quick and Easy Shopping Should Appeal to Men

The average Torrance and South Bay male likes to shop the quick and easy way and to see what he's buying. For these reasons, he's going to enjoy the new Sears store in the Del Amo Shopping Center which opened Wednesday.

The new Sears store of more than 283,893 square feet of floor space is a complete shopping center in itself. And the 52 departments have been arranged throughout the store according to shoppers' interests.

For convenience of the male shopper all of the men's apparel departments have been grouped together with the boys' clothing departments in the center section of the new store.

EASILY accessible from parking areas on the Sepulveda Blvd. side of the building are the "hardline departments" which hold such an appeal for homeowners and the do-it-yourself enthusiast. Here, within a few steps a man will find almost anything he needs for hobbies, workshop, and to supplement his assortment of home and garden equipment.

Display islands and wall racks throughout the departments of interest to the male bear price and size placards so there are few questions a man will have to ask.

THE SELF-SERVE features of the store will save many a shopping minute.

Modern Packaging Assists Shopper With Selections

You enter a store intent on buying a dress shirt. An array of sizes, colors, prices and styles confront you.

You quickly spot the type of shirt that interests you. Through the clear milm wrapping you rapidly check collar and sleeve size, price, style and color.

A sales clerk attends you, you make your selection, and you're on your way. It's taken only a few moments, but behind those few moments are hundreds of hours of study, designing, planning and testing to offer you merchandise that is easily available, securely protected, clearly labeled and attractively packaged.

IN A SEARS store, this is the job done by the company's

national information packaging and labeling division. Employees in this division are aware of customer desires for convenience, assurance, quality, appearance and fresh, clean merchandise. They try to design their labels to package accordingly.

Sears approach toward meeting these desires is unique. This is because Sears "controls its fixtures" as the merchants say. This means that all counters, racks, display tables and cabinets are carefully designed for the specific needs of each department in order to make shopping easier.

HUNDREDS of items, from infant's underwear to hardware, are labeled and packaged so they will fit perfectly into specific "fixtures."



WEARING APPAREL . . . Happy about their departments are the six managers of wearing apparel pictured here from left: Francis MacDonald, men's furnishings; William Chamberlin, yardgoods, patterns, and notions; James McCaffrey, blouses and sportswear; Aiden Lockhart, boys' wear; Gertrude Meyer, infants' wear, and Sadie Rivaist, corsets.



HEAD APPAREL DEPARTMENTS . . . These seven department managers will manage wearing apparel departments heavily stocked with broad assortments of merchandise appealing to men, women, and young 'dies. Left to right are Harold Edwards, men's dress clothing; Vivian Carlson, millinery; Mildred Benzenberg, girl's wear; Stan Firestone, men's work clothing; Edna Crozier, hosiery; Grace Kirkland, lingerie; and Red Olson, shoes.